



Monthly Visions

Reflection: LGBTQ Ally Training

By Arno Kumagai, MD, Arts & Activism Community Action Team Member

On Saturday, July 7, 2007, members of New Visions and the Shanti Project participated in a LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer) Ally Training, facilitated by Gabriel Javier of the University of Michigan's Office of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender Affairs. The term "ally" is used to describe someone from within or outside of LGBTQ communities who works in support of, and to advocate for, the rights and welfare of LGBTQ individuals. The 5-hour training was designed to increase awareness of issues related to gender identity and to work on developing skills to act as effective allies to LGBTQ people in the workplace, school, and society.



The training itself was both informative and interactive. Participants discussed the diverse identities and groups under the LGBTQ umbrella and explored the nuanced meanings of terms and phrases often used when discussing issues of importance to LGBTQ communities, such as "coming out," "biphobia," and "queer" (a term of self-identification used by many younger activists but not shared by all). Vignettes and role plays of interactions between LGBTQ individuals and potential allies and mentors were used to enhance participants' skills at approaching such situations with sensitivity and insight. Mr. Javier's facilitation of the training was superb, and he effectively stimulated reflection and discussion of gender identity-related issues in society in general, and in Asian Pacific Islander and South Asian communities in particular.



On a personal note, as a both a teacher and mentor to many students, I learned a great deal in the workshop. The training offered us all a space to critically reflect on and discuss our own and each other's understanding, assumptions, and biases about gender identity and helped us to become more outspoken and effective advocates for LGBT individuals.

New Visions is a community-university partnership whose mission is to inspire and support sustainable community action for ending violence against women in Asian communities of Southeast Michigan. Affiliated with the University of Michigan School of Social Work, we work with local Asian communities and domestic violence-related agencies achieve one vision: "Asian women are safe, and Asian communities are free of violence."

Join or Create a Small Gathering!

YOU can be a part of a small gathering to talk about domestic violence and other related issues through films, books, and other mediums. The Outreach and Engagement CAT is creating small gatherings in the Punjabi and Korean communities. Have fun and enjoy the company of others while learning! These small gatherings can involve members of your own community, friends, colleagues, or family, as well as individuals from other Asian groups.



For those interested in participating in a small gathering, or in creating your own group, please contact Eun Joo Lee for details 734.615.2106 or eunj@umich.edu.

Celebrating Independence

Every July 4th in the United States, a spectacle of lights decorate the sky to celebrate the Independence Day. It is a time to observe history, freedom, and joy. However, it is also a time to remember and reflect on the oppression that people have endured and survived here and around the world.

Around the world, specifically in Asia, August is a time when many countries celebrate their Independence Day (also known as National Day).

- August 9: Singapore separated from the Federation of Malaysia and became independent.
- August 14: Pakistan gained independence from the United Kingdom.
- August 15: Korea gained independence from Japan.
- August 15: India gained independence from the United Kingdom.
- August 17: Indonesia gained independence from Japan.
- August 31: Malaysia gained independence from the United Kingdom.



Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines the term, independent, as “not subject to control by others.”* Around the world, many individuals still live in fear and under control; they are bound by armed conflicts, practices, and/or institutions that often limit their freedom. We do not even have to look far to find these individuals as they can be our family, friends, and neighbors in an abusive relationship. Thus, as we celebrate Independence Day around the world, remember that YOU too can help create a community, free of violence and control.

* Independent, Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online, Retrieved July 24, 2007, <http://www.m-w.com/dictionary/independent>

Member Spotlight: Theresa Tran

Theresa Tran is a graduate of the University of Michigan with a major in Psychology and a minor in Asian/Pacific American Islander Studies. She has been an active member of the Arts & Activism Community Action Team (AA CAT) for the past year and a half. As an AA CAT member, she has been performing in various sketches across UM campus and in the community, linking New Visions with student organizations, and participating in trainings organized by New Visions and other entities to strengthen her capacity in domestic violence prevention.



Currently, Ms. Tran is working through the Americorps VISTA Program as a Program Administrator for The Village Initiative, an Ann Arbor based non-profit that matches caring adult mentors with youth in the juvenile justice and foster care systems. She is working to implement a transitional campus program for youth who have “aged out” of the foster care system.

In addition to her work with New Visions and The Village Initiative, she just finished her term as the Constituency Outreach Chair with the National Asian American Student Conference.

Since joining New Visions, Ms. Tran states that her knowledge about domestic violence, “a topic that was virtually off my radar before joining,” has significantly increased. Specifically, developing the sketches with the AA CAT has given her “an entirely new perspective on relationships.” She recognizes that although domestic violence is a very present issue in the Asian/Asian American community, it is not a topic that is discussed too often. However, she feels that it is important that community feels empowered by the work New Visions does—“feeling empowered to confront domestic violence can work as a significant catalyst for confronting many other issues that affect our community.”

Volunteer at a Domestic Violence Program Near You~~~

SafeHouse Center: Washtenaw County

Upcoming Training Dates

September 14	Friday	5:30-9:30
September 15	Saturday	9:00-6:00
September 16	Sunday	9:00-6:00
September 28	Friday	5:30-9:30
September 29	Saturday	9:00-6:00
September 30	Sunday	9:00-6:00



All direct service volunteer positions require you to complete our 40-hour training program. Contact the Volunteer and Intern Program Coordinator at (734) 973-0242 x 252 or at volunteer@safehousecenter.org for more information or to sign up for training.

Turning Point, Inc.: Macomb County

Volunteer training sessions are offered three times a year, Usually in September, February, and May. Michele Hay @ (586) 463-4430 x237 or visit www.turningpointinc.com

HAVEN: Oakland County

Visit www.haven-oakland.org. Contact Belle Kleinberg at Bkleinberg@haven-oakland.org or call 248-334-1284, ext. 659

First Step: Wayne County

Help one time or many. You can:

- Organize family events and field trips
- Provide services and support at our emergency shelter
- Be a 24-hour help line worker
- Paint, file, or sort donations
- Assist with support groups
- Join the on-call response team
- Accompany individuals to court
- Help with special projects

Call (734) 416-1111, Ext. 221 for more information. Visit www.firststep-mi.org/volunteer.htm

SAPAC (Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center): University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

SAPAC relies heavily on the commitment and energy of volunteers. We provide several volunteer opportunities for women and men: Networking/Publicity/Activism Program, Peer Education Program, and Men's Activism Program. Thirty-five hours of mandatory orientation and training is provided by SAPAC in the fall and winter terms, as well as regular in-services during the academic year. Contact (734) 998-9368 for more information.

New Visions: Alliance to End Violence in Asian/Asian American Communities

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